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Maiden win for Australian James Wharton at the Nürburgring

- **Taylor Barnard takes victory in a thrilling first race of the day**
- **James Wharton on the top step of the podium for the first time**
- **Family team Sauter Engineering + Design in the top ten**

Nürburg. First victory in ADAC Formula 4 for James Wharton (16/Prema Racing): The Australian finished ahead of his Prema team-mate Conrad Laursen (16/DNK) to triumph in race twelve of the season at the Nürburgring on Sunday. “Unbelievable, that is my first win in a European Formula 4 race. I am very happy with first place. The battles for position made the start a bit hectic, but I stayed cool through to the finish and maintained the lead through to the finish,” said Wharton. Taylor Barnard signed off with third place at the end of a successful weekend. The 18-year-old had previously claimed his second win in the morning’s opening race at the iconic circuit in the Eifel Mountains. The Brit took first place, ahead of Andrea Kimi Antonelli (15/ITA/Prema Racing) and Nikita Bedrin (16/ITA/PHM Racing), in an absolute thriller.

Visitors to the ADAC GT Masters event at the 3.629-kilometre track were treated to an entertaining race in bright sunshine and 16 degrees Celsius. Barnard took advantage of his pole position and positioned his 180-hp Formula 4 car in front of that of Antonelli at the start. However, the Mercedes Junior remained hot on the heels of the eventual race winner, and what developed was an exciting duel that lasted the full 30-minute duration of the race. Barnard fended off multiple attacks from the championship leader, and eventually crossed the finish line in first place. “I was under permanent pressure from Kimi. It was extremely nerve-racking. When I crossed the finish line, I let out a scream of joy over my radio. I was very relieved. That took a real effort,” said the two-time ADAC Formula 4 race winner. PHM driver Bedrin came home third to claim his second podium at the former Formula 1 circuit. Charlie Wurz (17/AUT/Prema Racing), son of former Formula 1 driver Alex Wurz, and Wharton, the best-placed rookie, completed the top five.

The reverse grid rule meant the first eight lined up in reverse order for race twelve of the season on Sunday afternoon. This meant Rasmus Joutsimies (19/Jenzer Motorsport) started from pole position for the first time. The Finn held off Wharton and led for the first seven laps. However, he was then passed by the driver from the Ferrari Driver Academy, who went on to take a comfortable victory. Wharton finished runner-up to claim his fourth podium of the season. “My grip deteriorated dramatically towards the end of the race, which is why I was no longer able to challenge for the win. Despite this, I am happy with the second place and pleased to pick up another trophy,” said Laursen.

Barnard came through from eighth on the grid to snatch third place. The double winner at the Nürburgring did come under pressure from fourth-placed Antonelli on the final lap, but was able to keep him at bay. “That is the end of an incredible weekend for me. I was able to pull off a lot of overtaking manoeuvres in the first few laps, and thus to close in on the drivers ahead of me. The closing stages were exciting again, and I am pleased to have finished on the podium,” said Barnard,

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describing his race. Joutsimies finished fifth to claim his best result of the season. McLaren junior Ugo Ugochukwu (15/USA/Prema Racing), Charlie Wurz (17/AUT/Prema Racing) and Nikita Bedrin (16/ITA/PHM Racing) followed him home. The best-placed German was Jonas Ried (17/Ehingen/PHM Racing) in ninth. Switzerland's Michael Sauter (17/Sauter Engineering + Design) crossed the finish line tenth to score points for the seventh time this season.

The ADAC's high-speed school now heads to the Lausitzring for its fifth race weekend of the season from 19th to 21st August, when it will feature alongside the ADAC GT Masters at the Family & Friends Festival. Antonelli leads the championship going into the final third of the season.

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